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REVIEWS.

Die wörtlichen Wiederholungen im Bêowulf. Richard Kistenmacher. Greifswald, 1898. pp. 44. (Greifswald diss.)

A GLANCE at the lists of programmes and dissertations published year by year shows that the *Bêowulf*, with its group of unsolved problems, still remains the centre of interest. Since, moreover, the questions relating to the authorship and the composition of the poem are to be solved, if at all, by internal evidence, there will be opportunity in long years to come for students to apply tests of constantly increasing delicacy. Whether the minute examination of Old English poems has on the whole added to our certainty or uncertainty concerning the authorship of many of them, may for the moment be left an open question. At all events, the patient, statistical investigations of these poems have enabled us to get a deeper insight into the nature and structure of Old English poetry than we could from productions of a livelier sort.

The dissertation before us is an industrious study which endeavors to weigh the value of the literal repetitions in the *Bêowulf* as a test of interpolation and also as a characteristic of Old English poetic style. As the author admits, his two lines of investigation have been to some extent anticipated by others. His aim is to apply a more exact method, and to pay especial attention to the extent and character of the repetitions. The first, and larger, division of the paper (pp. 8-32) considers the repetition of single words or word-combinations; the second division discusses the repetition of half-verses. The lists of single words repeated in the *Bêowulf* is followed by similar lists from the older *Genesis*, the *Exodus*, *Daniel*, *Elene*, *Andreas*, *Juliana*, *Christ*, *Gáðlác*, *Phœnix*, the later *Genesis*, *Judith*, and the *Battle of Maldon*, and by a summary (p. 24), which shows that this feature of Old English poetic style cannot safely be used as a test of interpolation. Other details relating to the position and character of the words repeated fill the remaining pages of the first division. The

second division is mainly devoted to a comparison between the *Béowulf* and the *Elene* in the repetition of half-verses. The result we may state in the author's own words: "Demnach kommen im *Béowulf* unter 3183 Versen 541 und in der *Elene* unter 1321 Versen 218 wiederholte Halbzeilen vor. Das Verhältnis ist in beiden Dichtungen merkwürdigerweise fast dasselbe." Obviously, therefore, if a poem like the *Elene*, the authorship of which has never been questioned, shows substantially the same degree of repetition as the *Béowulf*, we should be exceedingly cautious in applying so ambiguous a test.

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Zwei Isländer-Geschichten, die Hónsnáþóres und die Bandamannasaga mit Einleitung und Glossar herausgeg. von Andreas Heusler. Berlin, Weidmann 1897. M. 4, 50.

Laxdæla saga herausgeg. von Kr. Kálund (Altnord. Saga-Bibliothek 4). Halle, Niemeyer 1896. M. 8.

Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr herausgeg. v. Eug. Kölbing, ebend. 1896.

Die erste der hier zu besprechenden sagaausgaben ist ganz besonderer Art. Schon das Umfungsverhältnis der Teile zeigt dies: 62 Seiten Einleitung, 59 Seiten Text, 100 Seiten Wörterbuch. Heusler will seine Leser in den Stand setzen, die *Islendinga Sögur*, die er gibt, nicht nur zu lesen, sondern in ihrem ganzen Inhalt und Wesen zu würdigen. Fast scheint in der anatomischen Zergliederung nach Heinzel's Vorbild des Guten zu viel gethan. Doch wird der Anfänger, durch die Schule von Heuslers' Buch gegangen, mit sicherem Urtheil an die übrigen *Sögur* gehen. Anmerkungen unter dem Text verschmähte unser Herausgeber. Die Skaldenverse werden in einem kurzen Anhang erklärt. Das Wörterbuch genügt für sich allein vollständig für den Wortvorrat der beiden *Sögur*; er gibt auch erwünschte grammatische Fingerzeige. Die *Hónsnáþóris-* und die *Bandamanna-saga* werden durch Heusler's Ausgabe hoffentlich die verdiente Verbreitung finden.

Die *Laxdæla* von Kálund und die *Flóres saga* von Kölbing